

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

*A Daily Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy*

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**Proclamation by President Obama on Labor Day 2010***President comments on the contributions of working Americans*

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

September 3, 2010

LABOR DAY, 2010

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## A PROCLAMATION

Working Americans are the foundation of our Nation's continued economic success and prosperity. From constructing the first transcontinental railroad to shaping our city skylines, they have built our country and propelled it forward. Through great innovation and perseverance, our labor force has forged America as a land of limitless possibility and a leader in the global marketplace. On Labor Day, we honor the enduring values and immeasurable contributions of working men and women today and throughout our history.

As we recognize the contributions of the American workers who have built our country, we must continue to protect their vital role and that of organized labor in our national life. Workers have not always possessed the same rights and benefits many enjoy today. Over time, they have fought for and gained fairer pay, better benefits, and safer work environments. From the factory floors during the Industrial Revolution to the shopping aisles of today's superstores, organized labor has provided millions of hard-working men and women with a voice in the workplace and an unprecedented path into our strong middle class. By advocating on behalf of our families, labor unions have helped advance the safe and equitable working conditions that every worker deserves.

Today, as we emerge from the worst recession since the Great Depression, far too many American workers remain without a job. With every work hour lost and every plant closure and layoff, families and communities struggle to make ends meet and face difficult decisions about how to stay afloat. Yet, in the face of this tremendous challenge, our workers have renewed their commitment to achieving the American dream by training and educating themselves for careers crucial to our long-term competitiveness. To rebuild our economy, my Administration is focusing on job training and investing in industries that cannot be outsourced. By focusing on recovery at home, we are saving or creating millions of jobs in America and supporting the working men and women who will drive our 21st-century economy. More remains to be done, but we have taken important steps

forward toward recovery.

American workers have always been ready to roll up their sleeves, clock in, and earn an honest living. That steady determination is why I have confidence in the American economy and confidence that we can overcome the challenges we face. There is no greater example of our country's resolve and resilience than that of our workers. As we celebrate Labor Day, we honor those who have advanced our Nation's strength and prosperity -- American workers.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 6, 2010, as Labor Day. I call upon all public officials and people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that acknowledge the tremendous contributions of working Americans and their families.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

**Secretary Gates Cites Progress in Afghanistan Security**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates says success in Afghanistan will be determined by how well the Afghan government, supported by the international community, responds to the needs of its people.

At a September 2 press conference in Kabul with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Gates said that "much has been accomplished in this regard and I think we agree more remains to be done."

Karzai said the talks with Gates were wide-ranging and touched on the U.S.-Afghan strategic partnership, the fight against terrorism and the Taliban insurgency, and progress in strengthening the Afghan government and security forces.

Gates said he and Karzai also discussed efforts to curb the incidence of corruption, which Karzai acknowledged saps the strength and resources of the Afghan people and diminishes popular support for the elected government. U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry and Army General David Petraeus, who commands U.S. and allied security forces, have instituted new controls to

make sure U.S. and foreign assistance does not fuel corruption, Gates said.

"We fully support the Afghan government in its own efforts to address corruption," he said.

The defense chief arrived in Kabul September 2 after attending ceremonies in Iraq marking the change of command from U.S. combat forces to Iraqi forces.

Gates told reporters that the long-term commitment of the United States to the Afghan people and their security will remain strong, even as the coalition's military role changes over time as conditions allow. Gates and Karzai discussed a U.S.-Afghan strategic partnership declaration that is being developed.

The immediate goal of the United States in Afghanistan and the region, Gates said, is to disrupt, dismantle and defeat the terrorist group al-Qaida and its extremist affiliates in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and prevent the former Taliban regime from retaking control of the country. Success is critical for the future of Afghanistan, stability of the region and the long-term security interests of the United States, Gates said.

#### ADDITIONAL FORCES

Gates told reporters that nearly all of the 30,000 additional forces President Obama ordered last December have now arrived in Afghanistan. The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has added 7,000 personnel over the same period.

Meanwhile, the size and capabilities of the Afghan national security forces continue to grow, Gates said. The Afghan security forces have grown by 60,000 over the last nine months.

About 85 percent of Afghan National Army soldiers are partnered with ISAF forces in the field — "training together, planning together and fighting together, with Afghan forces increasingly taking the lead" for their country's security, Gates said.

Gates acknowledged that coalition forces and Afghan army and police forces have taken heavier casualties as they go into areas that have been dominated by Taliban insurgents. "Having said that, our enemies are paying a very steep price and feeling more pressure than ever," he added. "That will only intensify."

During his travel in Afghanistan on this visit, Gates met with U.S. troops in the southern Kandahar province, which is considered the heartland of the Taliban insurgency. He said he left his visit with U.S. military personnel with a feeling of encouragement.

"Everybody knows this is far from a done deal, but the confidence of these young men and women that they can be successful gives me confidence," Gates told reporters.

#### U.S. Statement Condemning Violent Attacks in Quetta and Peshawar

*United States remains committed to helping Pakistan's government and people*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesman

September 3, 2010

STATEMENT BY PHILIP J. CROWLEY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

U.S. Condemns Violent Attacks in Quetta and Peshawar

We strongly condemn the recent barbaric attacks on religious processions in Lahore and Quetta and on a place of worship in Mardan — near Peshawar. Our sympathies are with the victims and their families, and all those affected by these cruel acts of hatred. We stand with all of the people of Pakistan who should have the freedom to peacefully observe their religion, especially during Ramadan, and focus on rebuilding their lives after the floods, not mourn friends and family killed in terrorist attacks.

The United States remains committed to helping the government and people of Pakistan as they recover from the devastating floods and work to secure a more peaceful and prosperous future, free from extremist violence and threat.

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